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Message of the Governor of Montana

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MESSAGE

OF

GOV. EDWIN L. NORRIS

TO THE

ELEVENTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

OF THE

STATE OF MONTANA

IN EXTRAORDINARY SESSION

DECEMBER 27, 1909

Governor's Message.

To the Eleventh Legislative Assembly in Extraordinary Session:

You have been convened in extraordinary session, in accordance with the request of a large majority of the members of this Assembly, for the purposes stated in the call, as follows:

"First. To consider and, if found desirable, to appropriate such additional sum as may be necessary to permit the purchase of materials of every kind or character produced or manufactured in Montana that may be used in the construction of the Capitol additions, and to make any amendments to the Act authorizing the construction of said additions the Legislative Assembly in its wisdom may deem advisable.

Second. To make an appropriation for the support of the Publicity Department and for advertising the resources of the State for the fiscal year 1910."

You have heretofore committed to the State Board of Examiners the duty of building the additions to the Capitol. The Board is now performing that duty. With every act of the Board so far performed, and with every arrangement so far made for the construction of the wings, I have at all times been in absolute accord. You have not been convened on account of any dissatisfaction on my part with anything that has been done, or with anything that has been arranged for by the Board.

The enactment of the law authorizing the construction of the wings, any amendment that may be deemed necessary to be made thereto, the providing of funds to pay the cost of construction, and any and all regulations relative to the amount that may be paid for labor or materials, are purely legislative functions.

I have been constrained to grant your request and give you opportunity to assemble and exercise your best judgment, rather than to deny your petition and thereby arrogate to myself a legislative prerogative.

Full authority has been given you in the call to enact amendments, provide additional funds, select materials, and make or change any regulations that in your judgment may seem advisable.

The report of the Board of Examiners, showing what has been done and the plans that have been outlined for the furtherance of its duty, is submitted herewith. Your approval or further directions now seem in order. In my opinion, the Board has in every instance followed the plain provisions of the law heretofore enacted by you, and further responsibility is now committed to the Legislative Assembly, the supreme authority. That some of the materials entering into the construction of the wings can be produced elsewhere cheaper than Montana materials of like kind and quality, seems to be an unquestioned fact. Whether it is advisable to pay a higher price for materials produced or manufactured in Montana than that for which materials of like kind and quality can be procured elsewhere, and, if so, how much, you only, in view of the law now in force, may decide.

I submit that if you deem it advisable to make an additional appropriation sufficient to purchase any or all Montana-produced or manufactured materials that may enter into the construction of the wings, common fairness and the exercise of a sound business discretion seem to demand that opportunity be given to any and all Montana producers or manufacturers of such materials to submit bids for furnishing the same.

Any producer or manufacturer of materials who is not willing to submit to fair competition as between all producers and manufacturers of like materials in his State, would seem to be actuated more by selfish reasons than by the sense of fairness usually obtaining among business men.

For your information, it should be said that on April 23, when the second issue of Capitol bonds was offered for sale, no bid other than that of the State was made therefor. The following figures show the condition of the public building land grant fund:

First bond issue, six per cent	$350,000 00
Second bond issue, five per cent	500,000.00
Total	$850,000.00
Annual interest charge, first issue	$21,000.00
Annual interest charge, second issue	25,000.00
Total	$46,000.00
Amount in public building fund	$199,513.29
Annual net income, rents, interest	13,480.00

It is estimated that there is five hundred million feet of timber on the lands of the public building grant. This timber is largely remote from present market, and it will likely be some years before any large sales can be made at $3.00 per thousand, the minimum price fixed by law at which timber can be sold. There is no considerable demand for the agricultural land in the grant.

You gave the matter of the construction of the Capitol wings your careful consideration during the regular session. At your request you are now given opportunity for further consideration. I hope that your present deliberations may result in final legislative action on this subject.

This Assembly, in regular session, created a Publicity Department and made an appropriation for its maintenance, and also for advertising the resources of the State for the year 1909. Through an evident oversight, no appropriation was made for the year 1910. I recommend that such an appropriation as may, in your judgment, seem advisable be now made for the year 1910, and suggest that this appropriation can be made while the chief object of your assembling is under consideration.

There are many questions that, in my judgment, should receive favorable legislative attention, and under different circumstances I should not refrain from asking favorable action thereon by you. However, you have agreed to serve without expense to the State and it does not seem fair to ask or expect that you consume more time than is necessary to properly consider the subject mentioned in your request for this special session.

Your offer to serve without compensation is commendable, and it was no small factor in the determination of the question whether the extraordinary session should be convened.

The making of an appropriation to pay the expenses of this session seems unnecessary. The services, without expense, of a sufficient number of competent employes at the Capitol to perform any clerical duties required by you, are tendered by the elective and appointive State officers; your printing can be done under the State printing contract; and the Furnishing Board will supply the necessary janitor service.

EDWIN L. NORRIS,
Governor.